day a few weeks later, there was a letter for her. "It's got a city postmark," her mother told her briskly. "It isn't your Aunt Ernestine's writing, and I shouldn't wonder if it might be from that Miss Pendleton."

Slowly, but with swift-beating heart, Hulda opened the letter. A slip of blue paper, folded twice, fluttered to the floor, and her mother picked it up and spread it upon her knee. Then she caught her breath.

"Hulda Wylie, it's a check for twenty-five dollars made payable to you. Did you ever hear such a thing? Read what she says."

Hesitatingly, Hulda obeyed. Her voice faint and husky at first, cleared and grew stronger as she realized that Miss Pendleton had been on her guard and her secret was still safe.

My dear Hulda:

Since my return I have thought often of the many kindnesses you showed me while at your home. I am enclosing a small check which I wish you to spend for something you will thoroughly enjoy, and which I hope is at least a partial discharge of my indebtedness.

Sincerely your friend,

Charlotte Ross Pendleton.

"Well, if that isn't kind of her," exclaimed Hulda's mother, beaming. "Talk of indebtedness, when she paid up her bills as prompt as sunrise. I guess she took a great fancy to you, Hulda. You did wait on her nice, though nothing more than any boarder would have a right to expect. That's quite a little fortune, isn't it? Twenty-five dollars. Why, when I was at your age——"

But Hulda was no longer listening. She had read between the lines. Miss Pendleton was not showing her appreciation of any kindness she had received from Hulda during the summer. She was paying for the blue pitcher.

All at once the girl realized that she had come to a turning point. Her deception had started without her realizing it, in shyness and diffidence. Then when she was well enough acquainted to explain, she had grown to take satisfaction in the admiration which Miss Pendleton lavished on the blue pitcher. Later, matters had become so complicated, that every day made it easier to go along the same path, harder to face about. The slip of paper on her mother's knee told her how far she had strayed from safety and right. For to take Miss Pendleton's check was perilously close to dishonesty.

A brown head dropped suddenly into Mrs. Wylie's lap. Hot tears sprinkled her gingham apron. "O mother," a choking voice cried, "O mother! I don't know how I can, but I've got to tell you everything."

It was a long letter that Hulda wrote Miss Pendleton, and its length was not the only reason why it took a long time to write it. Postponing an explanation invariably makes it hard. But when Hulda signed her name, she had one comfortable assurance. Whether Miss Pendleton understood the rest or not, she would not fail to comprehend that Hulda Wylie was done with deception forever.

Apparently Miss Pendleton did understand. The letter that came in reply was very womanly and sweet. Indeed, it seemed that she as well as Hulda had learned a lesson.

"I've been ashamed often," Miss Pendle wrote, "to think I encouraged your hiding the breaking of the pitcher from your mother. And that isn't all. I am afraid I've pretended to a knowledge of many things I know very little about. Old china was only one of a number. I am just as ignorant of art and music, though I have liked to assume the airs of a person who is well-informed. You have one advantage over me, my dear, you have discovered your mistake much earlier than I have done, and will not have as hard a time in breaking up a bad habit."

Mrs. Wylie read the letter over twice in silence. Then she took her glasses and polished them vigorously.

"If the pieces of that blue pitcher are around here anywhere," said Mrs. Wylie to her daughter, "you bring them to me, and I'll see if I can cement it so that it will stick together, even if it won't hold water. That pitcher wasn't an heirloom, to be sure, but I think, after all that's happened, it had better be."—Churchman.

THE MISSING BOLT.

By J. Marvin Nichols.

It happened on one of those commercial highways that have played their part in the opening of the great Northwest. The horrible catastrophe took place where feats of splendid engineering were in constant evidence. The belts of steel stretched themselves across a fertile valley of unsurpassed beauty. The ascent was made around awful precipices and far up the distant granite hills. Through unapproachable grandeur—high up into the eternal hills—the railway found its course. At a given point one of these royal gorges must be crossed.

For ages, through this terrific rent in the earth, the restless, dashing, turbulent waters had made their way. The bed of the mountain stream had gone down until immeasurable depths had been reached. To stand on the overhanging wall and look down into the awful abyss makes one dizzy. To stand on the water's edge for an upward look reveals nothing but the stars in a far-off firmament. Amidst the sublime solitude of these everlasting hills, one waits for Jehovah to break the silence.

Across this mighty chasm the structure was thrown upon which were laid the threads of steel. It was a piece of wondrous skill. The day of its completion was past. The contractor delivered his work under the guarantee that the bridge would sustain any load that might be moved upon it. For years it endured the constant and excessive strain. To all appearances it was able to hold up any weight. But, by constant use and some degree of neglect, an apparently insignificant bolt lost its place in that bridge.

A great load was moved upon it. A quiver, a swaying above those awful depths— a careening, now a crash—a shriek of unspeakable horror—a pitch toward death—the dying echo far down the canyon—a passing tremor as the earth received the shock upon her bosom—and unbroken silence sets in again.

How strong was that bridge? Of what avail was all its apparent strength? How much stronger the structure than at its weakest point? Was not the measure of its strength at its point of weakness?

Ah! We must stand still until we have learned the lesson. Here's the principle that underlies the whole realm of human action. Here's the final definition of character. Here's the last statement of all that is majestic in manhood. Would that we might know the secret—the measure of strength is forever at the point of weakness. In other words, character is no stronger than at its weakest point. We know our strength of character as we discover our weakness.

The great apostle Paul discovered this fundamental principle: "For when I am weak, then am I strong." Not weakness in strength, but that the very consciousness of its existence enables us to set up a defense at the very point where the entire character is in constant jeopardy. What matters all our apparent greatness? The secret sin—the real point of weakness—is the identical measure beyond which no limit of strength ever reaches.—Cumberland Presbyterian.

THE TWO HEAPS.

"I see in this world," said Rev. John Newton, "two heaps—one of human happiness and one of misery; now, if I can take but the smallest bit from the second heap, and add to the first, I carry a point. If, as I go home, a child has dropped a half-penny, and if, by giving it another, I can wipe away its tears, I feel that I have done something. I should be glad, indeed, to do great things, but I will not neglect such little ones as this."

As a countryman was sowing his field, two London bucks happened to be riding by. One of them, thinking to make fun of the old put (as they styled him), called out to him, "Well, honest countryman, it is you that sow, but it's we that reap the fruit"! "Mayhap it may be so, master," bawled the countryman: "I am sowing hemp"!